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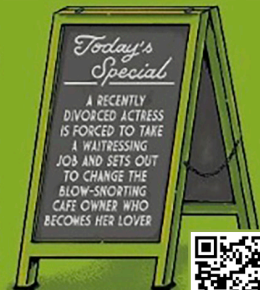
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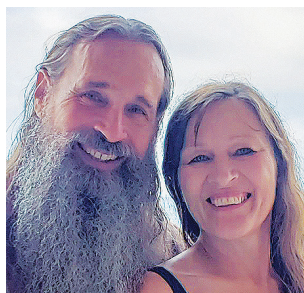
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11 TIPS FOR A HEALTHY GUT MICROBIOME

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- Eat Plants.
- The Rawer the Better.
- Blending Beats Juicing.
- Steer Clear of Industrial Meat.
- Avoid White Flour and Sugar.
- Eat Anti-Inflammatory Foods.
- Consume fermented food.
- Time restricted eating
- Consistency is the key





The Gift of Making Others Feel Special

As the holiday season surrounds us with twinkling lights and festive gatherings, there's no better time to reflect on the little gestures that make others feel truly special. The magic of this season

lies not only in the gifts we give, but in the love, thoughtfulness and warmth that we share with one another. Small acts of kindness—taking time to listen, offering a comforting hug or simply being present—are what create lasting memories and make the season bright.

This time of year, a heartfelt card or a few handwritten words can warm the spirit like nothing else. Sharing a simple note of appreciation with friends or family reminds them just how much they mean to us, and it's a beautiful way to capture the essence of holiday cheer. Thoughtful gestures don't need to be grand to be meaningful; it's often in the quiet, thoughtful moments that we make our deepest connections.

The holidays are also a season of warmth—literal and emotional. Gathering around the table with loved ones or giving a small, unexpected gift are simple ways to convey that we care. These gestures are reminders of the compassion, love and gratitude that bind us together. When we take a moment to share these with one another, we spread a joy that is truly at the heart of this season.

This holiday, as we all celebrate in our unique ways, let us remember that the best gifts are the ones that come from the heart. Whether it's sharing a cozy meal, lending a helping hand or even a warm smile to a stranger, every gesture contributes to a season filled with light, love and connection.

In this issue, we're delighted to share some inspiration to help add to the magic of this season for you and those you love. May your days be filled with joy, kindness and countless small moments that make your heart feel full.

Warm wishes and big hugs,

Trina & John

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Winter Semester Enrollment Now Open at Peaceful Dragon School

Peaceful Dragon School of Tai Chi and Chi Kung, led by Master Instructor Wasantha Young, announces open enrollment for the Winter Semester beginning January 6. Registrants signing up by December 15 can receive a \$10 discount on tuition



Wasantha Young

for ongoing classes by applying code W2025 when registering online. This semester, tai chi classes are available in-person on Monday mornings at 10 a.m. and Thursday evenings at 6 p.m., each offered at \$215 per semester.

The school also presents hybrid Chi Kung classes, with options to join in-person or online. Tuesday evening sessions start at 6 p.m., while Thursday morning sessions begin at 10 a.m., priced at \$215. Both tai chi and Chi Kung provide valuable health benefits, promoting relaxation, mindfulness and balance. Master Young's instruction integrates a profound respect for the harmony between human life and nature, empowering students to build strength, balance and well-being.

According to Master Young, "These practices are designed to support self-care, health and overall balance, serving as a wonderful complement to traditional healthcare routines."

Location: 1945 Pauline Blvd., Ste. B, Ann Arbor. To register for classes or for more information, call 734-741-0695 or visit PeacefulDragonSchool.com. See ad page 11.

Boost Mood, Reduce Pain and Recover Faster with Cryotherapy

Restore Hyper Wellness Ann Arbor offers innovative cryotherapy treatments designed to help individuals enhance their health, recovery and overall well-being. This state-of-the-art therapy utilizes



sub-zero temperatures to expose the body to controlled cold for up to three minutes, triggering a natural fight-or-flight response

that promotes healing, reduces inflammation and improves physical resilience.

Cryotherapy at Restore is ideal for stress relief, pain management, athletic recovery and mood enhancement. Upon entering the private session, clients don protective gear provided by Restore, including a robe, hat, socks, slippers and gloves. The experience is tailored to the individual, with music options available to add a personal touch. Sessions are guided by trained experts, ensuring safety and optimal results.

The benefits of cryotherapy extend beyond the session itself. Clients may experience elevated energy levels, reduced muscle soreness, enhanced sleep and cognitive improvements. The treatment also supports overall wellness by decreasing inflammation and promoting oxygen-rich blood circulation. For those new to the therapy, Restore's approach allows gradual acclimation, making the treatment accessible and comfortable.

Restore Hyper Wellness Ann Arbor is committed to advancing health through proactive therapies, offering a free consultation to create personalized wellness plans tailored to individual goals.

Location: 3225 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor. To make an appointment or for more information, call 734-780-7433 or visit Restore.com/Locations/MI-Ann-Arbor-MI001.

Shop Local This Holiday Season at Makers Market

Bloodroot Herb Shop and Ziggy's announce the annual Holiday Makers Market, a festive community event celebrating creativity and local artistry. Located in downtown Ypsilanti, this collaborative gathering will feature an



array of vendors showcasing unique products, from handcrafted goods to vintage treasures. The event promises a vibrant atmosphere where visitors can explore, shop and connect with the community.

The Holiday Makers Market exemplifies Bloodroot Herb Shop's mission of fostering local connections and celebrating bioregional resources. Alongside its daily offerings of organic, small-batch herbal teas, salves and other holistic products, the shop emphasizes community resilience. Regular donation-based workshops and sliding-scale clinical consultations underline their commitment to accessibility and inclusivity. Ziggy's, renowned for its dedication to music and the arts, adds its creative flair, making this market a unique seasonal highlight.

The event is free to attend and will take place from 12 to 5 p.m.,

featuring a diverse lineup of area artists, makers and sellers. Attendees can expect an enriching experience blending the joy of the holiday season with the charm of a community-driven marketplace.

For more information, call 734-802-5408 or visit BloodrootHerbShop.com.

Holistic Medicine Center Optimizes Health and Vitality

Dr. Ann Hughes, a board-certified family medicine physician and integrative medicine expert, provides a combination of Eastern and Western medical approaches for a holistic approach to health. At Dr. Hughes' Holistic Wellness Center,



Dr. Ann Hughes

patients receive personalized care designed to address the root causes of chronic conditions and improve overall quality of life.

Specializing in integrative medicine, Hughes focuses on chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, thyroid disorders, migraines and autoimmune diseases. She also supports patients struggling with fatigue, weight gain, anxiety, sleep disturbances and other complex symptoms that traditional approaches may overlook. Her comprehensive care model blends evidence-based alternative medicine, traditional therapies and lifestyle guidance to restore and optimize health.

Hughes' expertise includes advanced training in acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine, alongside a fellowship in integrative medicine at the University of Michigan. Her patient-centered approach incorporates natural interventions, functional medicine and holistic strategies to empower patients to achieve long-term wellness. By integrating Eastern wisdom with Western scientific rigor, the practice delivers effective, sustainable solutions tailored to each patient's unique needs.

Location: 4343 Concourse Dr., Ste. 170, Ann Arbor. To make an appointment or for more information, call 734-905-0318 or visit DrHughesHolisticCenter.com.

Holistic Gynecology Center Empowers Women's Wellness

Dr. Suman Tewari, founder of Ann Arbor Holistic Gynecology, offers a unique approach to women's health, combining traditional gynecology with holistic care. With a passion for providing comprehensive care, Tewari integrates her extensive medical training as an M.D. with advanced techniques and personal coaching to address the needs of her patients. Her practice centers on creating a space where women feel seen, heard and supported throughout their health journeys.

Tewari's approach goes beyond standard medical care, offering personalized guidance tailored to each patient's unique experiences. She believes that every woman deserves to be treated as an individual rather than a file or diagnosis. This perspective drives her mission to provide compassionate care and empower women to take control of their well-being. In addition to traditional gynecological services, Tewari offers coaching and insights into holistic health practices, guiding patients toward achieving physical, emotional and spiritual balance.



Dr. Suman Tewari

Location: 2345 S. Huron Pkwy., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-418-2188 or visit AnnArborHolisticGynecology.com.

Cultivate Gourmet Mushrooms with Dawn Farm Experts

The Cooperative at Dawn Farm announces its annual Edible Mushroom Log Workshop, a hands-on event for anyone interested in sustainable gardening and culinary exploration. Scheduled at noon on December 7 and 15, this engaging workshop provides participants with the tools and knowledge to cultivate their own gourmet mushrooms.



Attendees will learn about the fascinating world of fungi and its vital role in ecosystems. Guided by experts, participants will discover how to transform ordinary logs into small mushroom farms. The workshop includes team-based activities using professional tools to drill, plug and seal logs with two types of mushroom spawn. Each participant will leave with a fully prepared mushroom log, ready to produce Oyster mushrooms two to four times per year for up to four years, along with detailed care instructions.

Additional mushroom logs will be available for purchase at \$25 each, making perfect holiday gifts or additions to home gardens. The workshop combines education, fun and hands-on experience in a collaborative atmosphere.

Cost: \$40. Location: 6633 Stony Creek Rd., Ypsilanti. To register or for more information, call 734-485-8725 or visit DawnFarm.org.



The Surprising Perks of Micro Dosing GLP-1

GLP-1 receptor agonists, such as Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro and Zepbound, have garnered attention primarily for their role in weight management and blood sugar control. Yet, micro dosing of these medications reveals a spectrum of additional health

benefits, offering a holistic boost to wellness. Emerging research highlights their capacity to reduce risks of heart attacks and strokes, lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and improve sleep, mood and energy. They also show promise in diminishing addiction tendencies, enhancing hormonal balance and potentially mitigating the progression of conditions such as dementia, fatty liver disease and diabetic retinopathy.

These medications work by improving insulin sensitivity and regulating appetite, helping individuals overcome insulin resistance, a common underlying factor in many metabolic disorders. According to studies by the Cleveland Clinic and the National Institutes of Health, GLP-1 receptor agonists support cardiovascular and metabolic health, making them an essential tool for those aiming for overall wellness.

Lifestyle changes, such as incorporating a balanced diet and consistent exercise, are key to enhancing the effectiveness of these medications. Together, they create a synergistic approach to managing chronic health issues, offering a path to sustained vitality.

Source: Wycoff Wellness Center, located at 1226 Michigan Ave., East Lansing. To make an appointment or for more information, call 517-333-7270 or visit WycoffWellness.com. See ad on back cover.



Mindfulness App Helps Intensive Care Patients

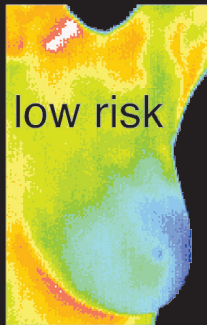
Individuals recovering from critical illnesses that spend time in an intensive care unit (ICU) frequently experience depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. Existing interventions in and out of the hospital have not been effective in relieving

the psychological distress symptoms of these patients. A study published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* tested various ways of delivering a mobile app-based mindfulness intervention to ICU survivors.

The study included 247 ICU patients that had been in the hospital for an average of more than 15 days and in the ICU for an average of almost seven days. The patients were randomly assigned to one of eight intervention groups that evaluated different combinations of treatment elements, including an introductory session via mobile app or therapist call, a once- or twice-daily guided mindfulness meditation regimen, and management of increasing symptoms via mobile app or therapist call. While all eight groups showed significant improvements in their psychological distress symptoms after three months, the optimal intervention included an app-based introduction, twice-daily guided meditations and an app-based response when a participant had increasing symptoms of depression.

Stem-Cell Treatment To Reverse Type 1 Diabetes

Reports from an early phase 1 clinical trial are encouraging for the reversal of Type 1 diabetes, an autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks the pancreas's insulin-producing cells. Without insulin, blood sugar builds up in the bloodstream and causes damage to the body. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 1.7 million Americans have the disease, for which there currently is no cure.



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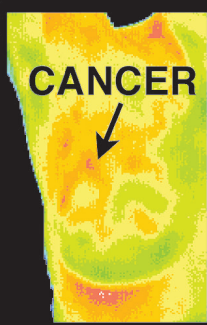
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The study, published in the journal *Cell*, reported on the progress of a 25-year-old woman with Type 1 diabetes who underwent stem-cell therapy made from her own cells. She began producing her own insulin less than three months after the treatment and continued to be free from insulin injections after one year. More research and

development of cost-effective manufacturing processes are needed before a stem cell-derived therapy will be available to patients.



Wet Cupping Therapy for Asthma

A study published in the *Turkish Journal of Medical Sciences* evaluated the use of wet cupping therapy (WCT) for mild to moderate asthma. Cupping therapy, in which localized suction is created on the skin with the application of heated cups, is a traditional method used in Persian medicine for treating various ailments. The study included 82 asthma patients divided into two groups: the control group was treated with common asthma medications, and the intervention group received three sessions of WCT between the shoulders. Clinical signs of asthma were gathered from all patients over eight weeks following the WCT. The researchers concluded that WCT can be an efficient therapy to improve respiratory complications of asthma patients.

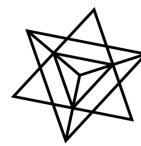
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Acupuncture for Shingles

Shingles (herpes zoster) is a viral disease that causes a red rash on the face or one side of the body, accompanied by fluid-filled blisters, pain, burning and tingling. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 1 million Americans suffer

from this condition every year. In a systematic review of studies, researchers evaluated 59 randomized controlled trials involving almost 4,000 shingles patients that had been treated with acupuncture. They concluded that acupuncture therapies were effective and safe for the treatment of this viral disease, reducing pain and skin lesions with few adverse effects.



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Embracing the Gift Economy Joyfully

by Charlespippi Barbieri



“Changing our relationship to money is a side effect of working in the gift. We move from a relationship where money is seen strictly as an asset to accumulate, to the way that money is just another way of expressing gratitude.”
– Marie Goodwin

“The obligation to give or to receive carries with it social and moral obligation to build on the gift and share one’s own work, not with the original gift-giver but rather with the whole world.” – Alexis Calve-Genest and Heather Morrison

“How do we change the world? Change the story.” – Charles Eisenstein

These quotes encapsulate the essence of the journey I wish to share—a journey into creating both new and ancient narratives of how humans relate and exchange with one another. The gift economy, as old as humanity itself, is built upon decentralized reciprocity: an ongoing cycle of giving, receiving, and giving again. This stands in contrast to the one-time, centralized market exchanges that dominate our global economic system, where money is often viewed strictly as an asset to accumulate, governed by external forces like the U.S. dollar.

Carl Jung once said, “The world will ask who you are, and if you do not know, the world will tell you.” In this season of gift-giving, it’s vital to reflect on living a story we truly believe in, rather than one imposed upon us by unchangeable social norms. We have the power to create rituals that honor and respect people while gifting the world. As Charles Eisenstein points out in his book *Sacred Economics*, “Money is

woven into our minds, our perceptions, our identities ... yet this is also cause for great optimism, because money is a social construction that we have the power to change.”

We can become more conscious of our thoughts—research suggests we have up to 60,000 thoughts a day, with 95 percent being repetitive and 80 percent negative. By becoming aware of our awareness, we gain authenticity and sovereignty, grounding ourselves in who we truly are rather than what others expect us to be. Ironically, it’s through discovering our unique authenticity that we embrace our common bonds and interdependence.

Interdependence is a fundamental tenet of the gift economy. Moving beyond stories of separation, we can embrace “interbeing,” a term coined by Thich Nhat Hanh, as a way of being truly connected. While this may seem challenging in a culture that values rugged individualism, it’s essential for fostering genuine relationships. The East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative, in Oakland, California, describes eight aspects of a gift economy: Generosity, Access, Intention, Abundance, Equity, Transparency, Faith, and Interdependence.

The gift economy creates and sustains community relationships around these principles, building on the concept of “think globally, act locally.” It allows individuals and communi-

ties more control over the exchange process, fostering connections without the need for dominant external forces. As Bob Dylan sang, “You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.”

Charles Eisenstein’s *Sacred Economics*—available for free in many languages—explores how our current economic system, with its aggressive marketing and manipulation, creates artificial scarcity to encourage competition. In contrast, the gift economy is boundless, driven by acts of kindness and compassionate love. Love is the genuine and fundamental exchange inherent in humans.

This shift involves moving from doing (consuming) to being (producing and embodying divine energy). Erich Fromm’s book *To Have or To Be* delves into this dichotomy, highlighting the importance of defining ourselves as boundless sources of giving rather than mindless consumers controlled by external forces.

I didn’t always embrace this perspective. As a child, I would tally and evaluate Christmas presents, driven by ego and a desire for control. The ego seeks only what validates its identity, unrelated to the soul’s absolute values. Recognizing this, we can choose to be vessels of unconditional love, like the sun radiating energy unconditionally, rather

than consumers of endless desires.

Rumi beautifully captures this sentiment:

“You have no idea how hard I’ve looked for a gift to bring you. Nothing seemed right. What’s the point of bringing gold to the gold mine, or water to the ocean. Everything I came up with was like taking spices to the Orient. It’s no good giving my heart and my soul because you already have these. So, I’ve brought you a mirror. Look at yourself and remember me.”

The mirror suggests that the most divine gifts aren’t things but the gratitude we feel for the presence of another being. By reflecting this back to someone, we become one with them.

Our task is to explore and co-create in our communities new ways to exchange and interact—not based on stories of separation but grounded in genuine interdependence and interbeing. There is no limit to this boundlessness in human connections.

Charlespippi Barbieri is a grandfather, chicken farmer, gardener, early childhood nurturer, writer and nature artist. His fondest hobby is teaching English as a second language to refugees and immigrants, helping them gain citizenship over the past 16 years. He resides at Blissful Blue Farms, in Scio Township. Connect with him at PippiBarbieri@gmail.com.



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Soulful Holiday Gifts

Restorative Presents for Loved Ones

by Marlaina Donato

Winter urges us to schedule more downtime, but the festive season can sweep us into a whirlwind of time-sensitive preparations, social gatherings and the nurturing of our loved ones. Between the office party and taking the family feast out of the oven, self-care can easily be forgotten, and we may wind up feeling overwhelmed.

Many of us are stressed out. According to a

2023 survey by the American Association of Retired Persons, 50 percent of caregivers are burdened emotionally from maintaining the role, and four in 10 caregivers rarely, if ever, feel relaxed. A national survey conducted by The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center found that 62 percent of parents feel the weight of burnout. Earlier this year, the American Psychological Association revealed in a survey that 57 percent of workers are enduring work-related stress

in the form of burnout, anger and emotional exhaustion.

This giving season, remembering family members near and far, as well as service providers, teachers, emergency personnel, nurses and tradespeople, can provide relief (and even a sprinkle of magic) to those that make a meaningful difference in our lives. While sharing holiday joy with others, it is important to also gift ourselves with soothing activities and helpful items to temper holiday stress.

The Gift of Self-Care

“Self-care needs to happen daily—whether meditation, journaling, taking yourself out for a cup of coffee with a book, cooking yourself nourishing food or even dancing to your favorite song in the kitchen,” says Caitlin Ball, a health and lifestyle coach in Zurich, Switzerland. “Sometimes, planning to have no plans is a special treat, especially for those of us that have packed calendars. Even if you’re spending the holidays with family, you don’t have to spend every waking minute together, and everyone will be happier if you are happy.”

Whether we go online to create a curated box of comfort for ourselves or surprise someone with a gift certificate from their favorite yoga studio or nail salon, acknowledging body, mind and spirit can be the ultimate gesture of generosity. “Gifting self-care to someone else is like saying, ‘I see you fully.’ It acknowledges that a person is more than just their day-to-day roles or responsibilities—they have emotional,



physical and mental needs,” says Chrissa J. Santoro, senior director of communications at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies, in Rhinebeck, New York.

Investing in someone’s peace or transformation outlasts and outshines less thoughtful presents. “Gifting a retreat experience, workshop or wellness service to a loved one is like giving them permission to prioritize themselves—a gift many people hesitate to give themselves, especially after hardship, long work weeks or grief,” Santoro asserts. “These experiences create a space for someone to step away from the stress, noise and demands of daily life, giving them a chance to reset. This kind of thoughtful gift offers not only physical rest, but also emotional renewal, reminding them of their own worth and helping them rebuild strength from the inside out.”

A self-care gift can be as simple as a basket of locally made artisan bread or as life-changing as a personalized therapeutic intervention. “Maybe that holiday gift is a gift certificate to see a coach, a counselor or a therapist,” suggests Paula Forte, an integrative health and wellness coach in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, who specializes in helping caregivers that too often care for others more than themselves.

Forte spent 45 years working as a registered nurse before becoming her husband’s caregiver when he was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. She knows firsthand the downward spiral of self-neglect. Her suggestions for mindful gift-giving include a week of meal delivery service, especially if eating healthy has been a challenge; simple pleasures, such as a canister of fragrant tea or a bouquet of flowers; or a ticket to a botanical garden, inviting the recipient to spend healthful time out in nature. Slipping a gift certificate into a holiday card for prepaid healthy lunches, a pickleball membership or the services of a home organizer might usher in a positive new chapter.

The Pampered Path

Since ancient times, people have sought luxurious and therapeutic respite in baths and the use of precious oils and scents. From hot stone massage to aromatherapy spa treatments, today’s bodywork modalities offer something for everyone. Pampering might be seen as a vanity-driven practice, but heading to the nearest spa or salon is a surefire way to boost endorphins that not only improve mood but lower stress hormones such as cortisol, promoting the body’s natural state of homeostasis. A 2020 study published in the journal *Scientific Reports* found that 10 minutes of massage, as well as simple rest, significantly reduces systemic stress by prompting the nervous system to switch into parasympathetic mode.

Giving someone a pampering experience can be a wonderful way to bring them fully back to all their senses. “A great option is a gift certificate to your favorite spa for a facial or a skincare basket to



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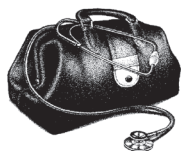


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create that self-care routine at home," says Diana DePaoli, holistic esthetician, herbalist and owner of Aura+Bloom, in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. "Men need self-care, too. According to my husband, Danny, it is sleep and a good shave, followed up with some extra love for his beard with my chamomile serum."

DePaoli's energy facials include tuning-fork sound healing, as well as reiki, an energy-healing modality, combining physical and spiritual restoration in one session. Even à la carte spa treatments like Himalayan-salt massage or foot reflexology does a body and soul good.

Gifting Kindness, Time and Presence

Making someone's world light up this holiday season doesn't need to involve expensive presents. Creating a special music playlist, serving breakfast in bed or inviting a neighbor out for coffee are simple, but lovely, gestures that make a person feel special. "I think coupons for experiences you can do together are very meaningful, and you get to spend quality time together.

Maybe a coupon for a day hike and picnic, or a movie night with lots of fun snacks," recommends Ball, adding, "The older people in our lives just want to hear from us or spend time with us. Give them a coupon saying you will call them once a week."

Forte's low-cost suggestions include "a book of coupons to run errands they simply don't have time to complete, like taking their kids to a museum or park, returning the purchase that was the wrong size or detailing their car." For DePaoli, inexpensive but thoughtful gifts can also fill someone's belly with love. "You can't go wrong with making someone a homemade meal or dessert," she suggests.

Adopting a Self-Care Mindset

Self-care is vital during the holidays and beyond. DePaoli says, "Being able to rest and reboot is very important to being able to have the energy and mindset to move forward in anything." And according to Forte, "Self-care isn't selfish. It is self-preservation."

Marlaina Donato is an author, painter and recording artist. Connect at BluefireStudio.art.



From Melancholy to Sweet Remembrance

by Marlaina Donato

"No loss is felt more keenly than the loss of what might have been. No nostalgia hurts as much as nostalgia for things that never existed," says Rabih Alameddine in one of his poignant novels, and his words strike a chord, especially during the holidays. As another year takes a bow at the stroke of midnight, it is easy for many of us to succumb to grief for what we have never tasted. Those of us that lost what is cherished can feel homesick for times that might never come again.

Much of our society—as well as our inner emotional landscape—is molded by unrealistic family ideals. The holidays can serve up dark times and memories for those that have struggled through a dysfunctional dynamic, and can trigger trauma. Isolating ourselves and turning down invitations might seem like the only way of coping, but there is a fine line between being a prisoner of the past and living joyously in the present.

The willingness to create fresh memories or start new traditions with loved ones can be a soul-soothing balm. For those traversing a solitary path, novel activities and social gatherings can provide something to look forward to during the festive season. Feeding pigeons in the park, gifting a delicious dessert to a mail carrier, attending a religious service or having a winter picnic can help us find a sweet spot that tempers the holiday blues.

Although the world is decked with festive reminders, some people mourn a rapidly changing society, but we can maintain surer footing when we remind ourselves to tap into beauty within reach, change monotonous customs and move forward while looking back with nostalgia.

Marlaina Donato is an author, painter and composer. Connect at BluefireStudio.art.



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Jean Shafiroff

on A Philanthropist's Calling

by Sandra Yeyati

New York socialite and humanitarian Jean Shafiroff is the author of *Successful Philanthropy: How to Make a Life of What You Give*, in which she offers readers the motivation and practical advice to donate time, knowledge and resources to causes that inspire them. She is the producer and host of a television show that airs six times a week through LTV studios in East Hampton, New York, where she interviews apoliticians, celebrities, business leaders and prominent philanthropists.

In recognition of her generosity and extensive work as a volunteer fundraiser, she has received numerous awards, and in 2022, she was proclaimed the First Lady of Philanthropy by the New York State Assembly. Every year, Shafiroff hosts and underwrites large cocktail parties in her homes on behalf of different charities, with a special focus on women's rights, underserved populations, health care and animal welfare. She serves on the boards of the Southampton Hospital Foundation, Mission Society of New York City, Couture Council of the Museum at Fashion Institute of Technology, French Heritage Society, Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education, New York Women's Foundation, Global Strays, Southampton Animal Shelter and the Historical Society of Palm Beach County.

Shafiroff has a bachelor's degree in physical therapy and an MBA in finance from Columbia University. She worked as a physical therapist at St. Luke's Hospital, in New York City, and as an investment banker on Wall Street. Together with her husband, Martin, vice chairman of global wealth management at Stifel, they have raised two daughters.

What is your definition of philanthropy?

Anyone can be a philanthropist. If you do not have the money to donate, you can become a philanthropist by giving your time and knowledge, which are two very valuable resources. Many people do a tremendous amount of volunteer work. That being said, I believe that those who have the financial resources have an obligation to give, because life is not created equal.

Why should people be generous with their time, knowledge and resources?

We live in a world where hunger, homelessness and other terrible hardships exist. There is great need, and the government cannot do everything, so that is where individuals, foundations and businesses step up to the plate and get involved.

Giving is a wonderful, feel-good experience. The giver receives far more than the receiver, and by giving, we help to equalize the disparities between those that have and those that do not have. I feel blessed to be involved in philanthropy. I encourage everyone who has a little time to get involved.

What prompted you personally to engage in philanthropy?

Working as a physical therapist at St. Luke's, an inner-city hospital where my patients lived at or below the poverty level and had serious health issues, I learned right then and there that life is not fair. I believe that those of us who have the ability to be helpful have an obligation to do so.



Michael Panliccia

I also travelled to visit orphanages, schools and people that lived in huts in Cambodia, as well as very poor sections of Colombia, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and China, and those experiences were life-changing. My own life in the United States is so different. I feel like I have to do something, otherwise I have pretty much wasted my lifetime. It is very fulfilling to do philanthropic work, and I will continue to do it for the rest of my life, so long as I am able.

What advice do you have for people that want to become philanthropists?

I suggest following your passions. If a relative had breast cancer and you want to find a cure, maybe you want to get involved with a charity that is working on breast cancer research. If you have an interest in the arts, maybe you want to support a museum.

Read all you can about a charity before you get involved. Google them. Look at their website. Read articles about them. Look for a charity that is well-run, has a low overhead and reports how the funds are being used. *GuideStar.org* or *CharityNavigator.org* rate the larger charities.

Why do you believe it is important to teach kids about the value of giving?

Philanthropy has to continue in the future, so we need to encourage children to engage in it in order for it to survive. Philanthropy needs to be taught to children by our being good role models. Parents who are involved in philanthropy often involve their children.

“The giver receives far more than the receiver, and by giving, we help to equalize the disparities between those that have and those that do not have.”

Schools need to teach about its importance and have community service requirements. It is key to mentor and encourage future generations to engage in philanthropy.

What about philanthropy in terms of the older generations?

For a person who is retired or who has raised a family and is now an empty nester with a lot of time on their hands, it is very fulfilling to get involved in philanthropy. Rather than sitting in front of the television or playing golf every day, which maybe they have absolutely no interest in, getting involved in philanthropic causes can create meaning in their lives. When you volunteer, you meet a lot of nice people and make friends. You also know that you are helping those who need help, and that is a feel-good experience. It is a very worthwhile use of your time.

Sandra Yeyati is national editor of Natural Awakenings.



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Healthier Holiday Cookies

Easy Switches That Don't Compromise on Taste

by Maya Whitman



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Whether it's chunky chocolate chip, classic sugar, jammy rugelach, spicy gingerbread, Russian teacakes or cinnamon-dusted snickerdoodles, the holidays would not be complete without a festive array of cookies. Seasonal favorites usually pack on the sugar, but with a little know-how, whipping up healthier versions can be both easy and fun.

"The most important thing to remember is that the techniques are the same; only the ingredients have changed," says Christina Pirello, Emmy Award-winning host of the national public television cooking show *Christina Cooks!* and author of 13 plant-based cookbooks. "Even healthy versions of

cookies can feel indulgent while being better for you. Use the best quality ingredients you can, and you'll never go wrong."

Sugar Savvy

Most conventional cookie recipes require up to two cups of sugar, not-so-good news for any health-conscious sweet tooth, but alternatives are plentiful. "With the caveat that most sweetener substitutions require some adjustments to make sure the final texture still works, there are some fabulous options that up the nutrients, add more flavor and depth and pack much less of a glycemic punch," says Katie Wells, founder of Wellness Mama, an online resource for women and moms that want to live a healthier life.

The glycemic index (GI) is a value used to measure how much specific foods increase blood sugar levels on a scale of zero to 100, where sugar is 100. Numerous studies have found that following a low GI diet may reduce blood sugar levels and improve blood sugar management in people with Type 2 diabetes.

Monk fruit and unprocessed forms of stevia, a plant-based sweetener, are blood-sugar friendly and nutritious when used alone, but are controversial when combined with erythritol, a sugar alcohol that, based on recent studies, is suspected of increasing the risk for blood clotting, stroke and cardiovascular events.

For Pirello, baking without pseudo sweeteners or processed sugar does a body good while imbuing festive favorites with even deeper flavor. "For me the best options for cookies are coconut sugar and beet sugar as both are granular and can be substituted 1-to-1 in recipes. Both are the color of brown sugar so your cookies may take on a darker color, but the flavor will be amazing. I also use brown rice syrup, but often mixed with coconut or beet sugar." For the best flavor, Pirello praises 100 percent pure monk fruit, as well as her no-calorie favorite, Bocha-Sweet, which is made from kabocha squash and "tastes and behaves like sugar."

In addition to coconut sugar, Wells also favors maple syrup and honey, which require an increase in dry ingredients to balance

the liquid but add amazing flavor and other beneficial properties, such as naturally occurring minerals and antioxidants.

Common dates, larger and plumper Medjool dates and other dried fruits can replace conventional sugar with rich sweetness, especially for no-bake holiday cookies and bars. Wells likes the versatility of dried fruits when chopped or blended. She recommends soaking them before using in recipes to help improve their texture.

For cookie dough recipes that do not require much liquid, powdered date sugar can be used in place of sugar 1-for-1 while reducing dry ingredients by 25 percent. Mashed bananas can rock an oatmeal cookie recipe, taking it to another level in terms of flavor without any other added sweeteners.

Common Substitutions

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup honey or maple syrup for 1 cup of sugar

- 1 cup of blended dates for any amount of sugar in a recipe
- 1 cup of unsweetened applesauce for 1 cup of sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of mashed ripe bananas for 1 cup of sugar
- For vegan cookies that won't crumble, mix 1 tablespoon of finely ground flax seeds with 3 tablespoons warm water to replace 1 egg.

Gluten-Free Delicious

Gluten-free (GF) baking has come a long way with plenty of GF flour options, but knowing which ones to use can make or break a holiday baking spree. "It has never been easier to make gluten-free cookies that taste almost identical to their gluten-based inspirations," says Wells. "There are even organic, measure-for-measure flours that

let you bake the original recipes as written."

Pirello sees more of a learning curve. "It's such a challenge to make a good gluten-free cookie, but with products like almond flour out there, you can do it," she says. "Use a gluten-free flour mix—not a cake or cookie mix—and mix it with 75 percent almond flour to create a moist yummy cookie. They will always be fragile unless you use eggs, but it works for me without them."

The Secret Ingredients

In the end, baking is all about having fun. "They're cookies, not world peace, although I think more cookies could bring about world peace," Pirello quips, suggesting what we all know: love is the secret ingredient in any holiday cookie recipe.

Maya Whitman is a frequent writer for Natural Awakenings.

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THUMBPRINT COOKIES WITH JAM

YIELD: 36 TO 48 COOKIES

5 Tbsp vegan butter substitute
¼ cup coconut sugar
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
½ cup sprouted whole wheat flour or whole wheat pastry flour
1 cup fine almond flour
2 Tbsp arrowroot
½ tsp baking soda
Pinch of sea salt
Strawberry or other fruit-sweetened preserves

Preheat oven to 350° F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Place all the ingredients, except the preserves, in a stand mixer and mix until a stiff dough forms.

Form the dough into walnut-size balls and arrange on the baking sheet, allowing about an inch between each cookie for rising. With a wet thumb, make an indentation in each cookie. Using a small spoon, fill the indentation in each cookie with preserves. Bake for 13 to 14 minutes. Remove cookies from the oven and allow to cool completely before transferring to a container.

Recipe courtesy of Christina Pirello.



Aleksandrs Samulovs from Izobrazheniya pol'zovatelya Aleksandrs Samulovs/CanvaPro

CHOCOLATE COFFEE COOKIES

YIELD: 16 COOKIES

⅔ cup sprouted whole wheat flour or whole wheat pastry flour
½ tsp baking powder
2 Tbsp arrowroot
Pinch of sea salt
Generous pinch of cinnamon
18 oz dark, non-dairy chocolate, coarsely chopped
4½ oz extra virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp spring or filtered water
3 Tbsp of store-bought egg replacer with 6 Tbsp of water (or mixture of 3 Tbsp finely ground flax seeds with 9 Tbsp warm water) and let sit for one minute to thicken
1 cup coconut sugar
2 Tbsp brewed espresso
5 oz pecans, coarsely chopped
5 oz hazelnuts, coarsely chopped

Preheat oven to 350° F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Whisk together flour, baking powder, salt and cinnamon. Place 12 ounces of chocolate and oil in a heat-resistant bowl over simmering water. Cook, stirring occasionally until the chocolate has melted and is creamy and smooth. Set aside.

In a stand mixer, whip the egg replacer, sugar and espresso to combine well. Add the melted chocolate mixture and mix well. By hand, fold in the nuts, the remaining 6 ounces of chocolate and the other dry ingredients to form a soft cookie dough.

Use a spoon to drop 16 (or so) ½-ounce mounds onto the baking sheet, leaving at least two inches between cookies, as they will spread. Bake for 15 minutes or until the tops crackle. Allow to cool completely before transferring to a container.

Recipe courtesy of Christina Pirello.



CHEWY CHOCOLATE CHIP ALMOND COOKIES

YIELD: 28 TO 30 COOKIES

- 5 Tbsp vegan butter substitute
- ¼ cup Suzanne's Specialties Maple Rice Nectar
- 6 Tbsp coconut sugar
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- Pinch of sea salt
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- 1 cup almond flour
- ½ cup whole wheat pastry flour or sprouted whole wheat flour
- ½ cup rolled oats
- ½ cup walnuts, coarsely chopped
- ⅔ cup non-dairy, dark chocolate chips

Preheat a conventional oven to 350° F or convection oven to 325° F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Whip together vegan butter, rice nectar, coconut sugar, vanilla, sea salt and cinnamon until smooth. Mix in almond flour, wheat flour and oats to form a soft, sticky dough. Fold in nuts and chocolate chips until well-incorporated through the dough.

Scoop tablespoons of dough and arrange on the baking sheets, leaving room for them to grow—approximately 18 cookies on a sheet, three across and six down. Do not press the cookies down.

Bake for 13 minutes. Remove the trays from the oven. Using a small spoon or spatula, slightly and gently flatten the cookies.

Recipe courtesy of Christina Pirello.

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Caring for Anxious Pets While We're Away

How To Choose the Right Kennel or Pet Sitter

by Ruth Roberts, DVM, CVA, CVH, CVFT, NAN

All pets, including cats and dogs, can feel distress when their routine or environment changes. Long-term stress can weaken their immune system, leading to behavioral problems or illness. It is essential to find ways to reduce anxiety when leaving a pet with a kennel or sitter.

Stress During Owner Absence

A report by the animal health company Zoetis, the Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations and the Human Animal Bond Research Institute shows that the bond between pets

and their owners provides both physical and mental benefits. When this bond is interrupted, even temporarily, pets may become anxious. Staying in a kennel or with an unfamiliar pet sitter can cause feelings of insecurity and stress, which can negatively impact their mental health.

Their anxiety may manifest through destructive behaviors, excessive barking or meowing, or aggression. Changes in appetite, pacing and excessive grooming are also common indicators of tension. Pets that are particularly attached to their owners may experience

heightened levels of the stress hormone cortisol in their absence, making them more susceptible to anxiety in new environments.

Repeated exposure to stressful separations can result in chronic anxiety, which may damage the bond between pets and their owners, creating lasting behavioral issues that make it difficult for pets to reconnect when their owners return.

Priorities for Anxious Pets

Beth Hrniciar, a holistic pet health coach and trainer in Connecticut, emphasizes the importance of considering a pet's anxiety level when setting care priorities. For pets with mild anxiety, she recommends ensuring the pet sitter is able to provide over-the-counter anxiety relief supplements. "It is also crucial that the kennel or sitter knows how to use calming products, such as a Thundershirt or a calming collar," Hrniciar advises. For more severe anxiety, she recommends trial runs to help the pet acclimate and become familiar with the staff.

Hrniciar also recommends choosing facilities that offer a safe space for pets that are anxious about fireworks or storms, opting for kennels or sitters with secure enclosures and amenities like white noise machines or calming soundtracks.

Experience, Cleanliness and Routine

"Anxious pets need experienced caregivers," Hrniciar asserts. "While some anxiety is



normal and may decrease as a pet adjusts to a new environment or routine, it is crucial to have someone who can provide a quiet space for them to relax.” Someone without the right experience may not fully understand how frightened an animal is and how they might injure themselves while trying to escape from a stressful situation.

Cleanliness is critical, Hrnciar notes, particularly for pets that self-soothe by chewing. A clean environment prevents infections from unsanitary conditions.

“Dogs thrive on structure,” she says. “Regular feeding and walking schedules help reduce stress in nervous dogs.” Caregivers should maintain the routine established during trial visits, allowing pets to feel more secure by knowing what to expect.

“Cats are creatures of habit,” Hrnciar explains. It is important to keep anxious cats in familiar environments—maintaining their regular routine is key. Pet sitters should avoid introducing new scents or sounds, and, if possible, visit beforehand to build trust with the pet.

Questions for Potential Pet Sitters

“Knowing who will be handling your pet and their qualifications is essential for ensuring the pet’s safety and comfort,” says Hrnciar. To find the right sitter for an anxious pet, ask about their experience with similar animals. For pets that are wary of strangers, it is important to ensure the sitter understands how to give them space to adjust. Ask kennels about group play, temperament testing, dietary accommodations and emergency protocols.


Holistic Strategies

“Socialization should be tailored to each pet. Introduce anxious animals to new settings at their own pace,” Hrnciar advises. For pets that are accustomed to being around other animals, group play can offer comfort and help ease their nerves.

Hrnciar highlights the benefits of calming scents, such as essential oils and pheromone sprays, for reducing stress. Pairing these with calming music or therapeutic tools like pulsed electromagnetic field pads or light therapy can create a soothing environment for anxious pets.

For severe anxiety, Hrnciar recommends natural remedies over pharmaceuticals. “Properly sourced CBD [cannabidiol], calming mushrooms and essential oils can offer significant relief with minimal side effects,” she advises. She also encourages exploring zoopharmacognosy—a method where animals self-select herbs, flowers and other natural remedies to restore balance to their systems. This approach allows pets to tap into their natural instincts, potentially finding relief in a more intuitive way.

Ruth Roberts is an integrative veterinarian and holistic health coach for pets, as well as the creator of The Original CrockPet Diet. Learn more at DrRuthRoberts.com.



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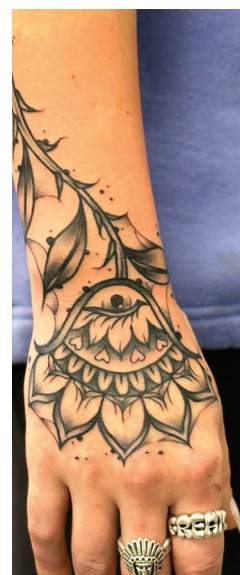
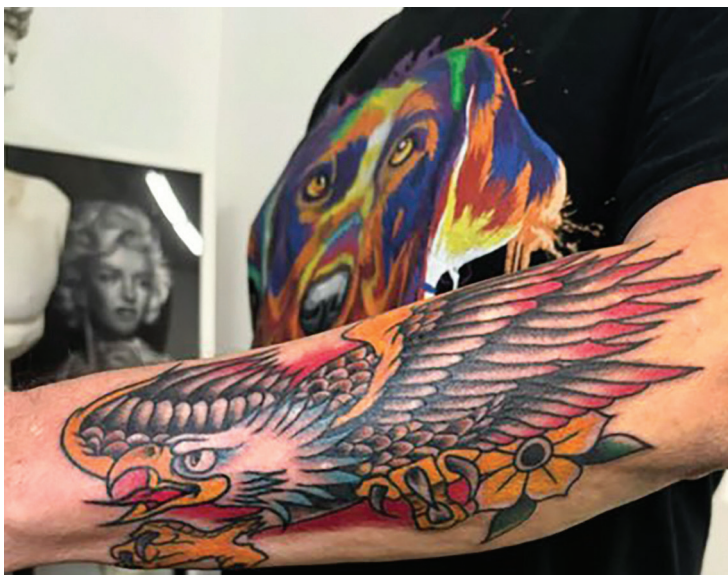
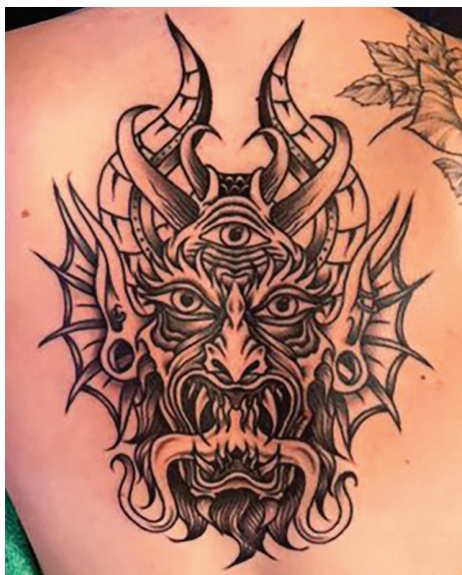


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Tattoos today are more than just decoration—they're a way for people to express themselves. Many choose custom designs that show who they are. These tattoos, created with the help of an artist, often carry deep personal meaning, symbolizing the wearer's values, identity or life experiences.

The journey starts with a conversation. The person getting the tattoo shares their ideas, stories and inspirations. The artist listens, working with them to bring these ideas to life as a unique design. This teamwork makes the tattoo not only beautiful but also deeply meaningful, creating a strong connection between the person and their tattoo.

A custom tattoo can mark an important life event, honor a loved one or show personal growth. For many, it's a way to express something that's hard to put into words. The tattoo becomes a visible reminder of their journey, serving as a source of strength and self-expression.

This co-creation process can also be empowering, giving people a sense of control over their story. For those who've faced challenges

or changes, a tattoo can symbolize healing or resilience. By designing their tattoo, they take ownership of their body and their personal story in a powerful way.

Choosing a design and placement can even strengthen body positivity. The tattoo becomes part of how they choose to present themselves, boosting confidence and connection to their body.

In the end, custom tattoos are a deeply personal form of art. Through collaboration with an artist, people create tattoos that tell their stories, reflect their values and celebrate what makes them unique. This journey turns tattooing into a meaningful and empowering experience.

Greg Kutella is a tattoo artist that transforms ideas and concepts and brings them to life. Collaborating closely with clients, Kutella creates custom tattoos that are both visually captivating and deeply personal, while ensuring a safe, and comfortable experience.

To book a consultation or for more information, call or text 313-234-3469 or visit Instagram @onewiththeneedle.



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

Gemini – 1pm. They write and perform acoustic music for children and families, celebrating with their audiences the warmth, fun and joy of family life. \$15, \$10/ kids 12 & under. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4

Wonder Walk: Rafting the River – 5:30-6:30pm. Adventure journaling. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

30-Day Plant-Based Pledge & Food Sampling at Kindlefest – 5-10pm. Veg-Michigan will be handing out delicious plant-based food samples and signing up participants for our 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge. Ann Arbor Farmers Market, 315 Detroit St, Ann Arbor. VegMichigan.org.

Supercoolwicked – 8-9pm. She performs her stunning and jubilant new work “Negro, Spiritual” in connection with UMMA’s exhibition, *Silver Linings: Celebrating the Spelman Art Collection*. This experimental musical explores self-reflection, ancestral veneration and transformation. Free. Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Apse, Ann Arbor. umma.umich.edu/visit/event.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

Dexter Winter Farmers Market – 9am-1pm. Features art and crafts, bread and baked goods, jewelry, fresh produce, eggs, cheese, meats and more. Huron River Methodist Church, 7643 Huron River Dr, Dexter. DexterMarket.com.

Edible Mushroom Log Workshop – Dec 7 & 15. 12-2pm. Guided by experts, learn how to transform ordinary logs into small mushroom farms. \$40. The Cooperative at Dawn Farm, 6633 Stony Creek Rd, Ypsilanti. Tinyurl.com/4vpbuuau.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10

Sunrise Nature Hike – 8:30-10:30am. Join naturalist Elle Bogle for a morning exploration of the Southern portion of the park. Park Lyndon, 18801 N Territorial Rd, Chelsea. Registration required: Washtenaw.org.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11

Wonder Walk: Desert Dreaming – 5:30-6:30pm. Explore some of the unique desert plants at MBGNA and learn about the uses of these plants. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

Neonics & Advocacy: Protecting Pollinators and Influencing Policy Webinar – 6pm CT. Featuring Lucas Rhoads, Senior Attorney with Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)’s Pesticides & Pollinators Team. Free. Register: AnnArbor.WildOnes.org.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

Annual Holiday Greens Workshop – Create your own holiday wreath, mantelpiece or table decoration. Space is limited, so registration with the Ann Arbor Garden Club is required. \$18. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

Holiday Makers Market – 12-5pm. Features an array of vendors showcasing unique products, from handcrafted goods to vintage treasures. Free admission. Ziggy’s, 206 W Michigan Ave. Ypsilanti. 734-802-5408. BloodrootHerbShop.com.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

Wonder Walk: Desert Dreaming – 1-2pm. Explore some of the unique desert plants at MBGNA and learn about the uses of these plants. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

Wonder Walk: Winter Solstice – 5:30-6:30pm. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

Open Stage – 8pm. Take your music to the masses. Open Stage nights offer supportive audiences and a terrific space. Performers have 8 mins (or 2 songs) each to do their thing. \$3, free/members, students. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

Dexter Winter Farmers Market – 9am-1pm. Features art and crafts, bread and baked goods, jewelry, fresh produce, eggs, cheese, meats and more. Huron River Methodist Church, 7643 Huron River Dr, Dexter. DexterMarket.com.

Solstice Morning Mindfulness Hike – 10-11:30am. Join naturalist Elle Bogle and mindfulness instructor Julie Woodward for a hike in the beautiful DeVine Preserve to celebrate the returning sun and the transition into winter. DeVine Preserve, 6110 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. Registration required: Washtenaw.org.



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DAILY

Ayurveda For Us – Provides online consultations, where clients receive personalized guidance to address chronic health issues and reclaim their vitality. With a focus on diet, herbalism, mental and spiritual healing and lifestyle adjustments, Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to wellness. To schedule a free 30-min discovery call: [Calendly.com/d/4dc-gws-6fw/discovery-call](https://calendly.com/d/4dc-gws-6fw/discovery-call). For more info & appt: AyurvedaFor.us.

Herbs for the Southeast Michigan Garden – Learn how to grow and use 20 culinary and medicinal herbs suited for the southeast Michigan garden. Will cover preservation techniques, basic medicine making and crafting herbal oils, poultices, infused honeys and vinegars plus more. Free. More info & register: CastleRemedies.podia.com.

Introduction to Homeopathy Class – Learn how to choose remedies and how to use them. Class contains nearly 4 hrs of pre-recorded videos. Downloadable resources. \$75. More info & register: CastleRemedies.podia.com.

Tai Chi or Chi Kung Early Bird Discount – Classes begin Jan 6-Apr 10. Start your New Year with a focus on self-care for your health. Reduce stress, improve mindfulness, improve balance, and enhance your well-being. Register early and get a \$10 discount. Use code W2025. \$215. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Holistic Health Consultation – 9am-7pm. Online or phone consultation consultations take about 1 hr and are provided by Certified Xolar Vibronics Holistic Educator and Life Coach Ikaro Phoenix. Be introduced to various techniques, elements or holistic ways of viewing the situation which help the soul to be reeducated and empowered to deal with problems and eliminate them from their root. \$150. For appt: LivingWisdomCoaching.earth.

Pets & Parents Reiki Session – 9am-9pm. Sessions for wellness, critical care and end-of-life transition. Actively experience the use of reiki touch with your pet. Learn additional tips for helping your pet. Virtual 40-min appt. \$20. 231-590-0001. TCDesoto@gmail.com.

The Best Affirmation for You – 10am. Learn about the power of affirmations and how they can bring about positive events and circumstances. Call for a 10-15-min consultation with a licensed professional counselor to pick the best affirmation for you. Purchase an affirmation stone to enhance what you are affirming in your life by having a visible reminder. Free. 734-644-6943. Harmony2c.com/affirmation-stones.

Tiny Lions Lounge & Adoption Center (TLC) – 12-7pm, Wed-Sun. Offers feline-friendly activities with kittens and cats available to take home. 5245 Jackson Rd, Ste A1, 734-661-3575. TinyLions.org.

Naturally Purifying and Supercharging Your Body Podcast – 7-7:45pm. Matthew Hazen is the owner of Human Consciousness Support, a company that produces a unique nutraceutical product called MasterPeace. Free. BuzzSprout.com/1206776/14236700.

WEEKLY

Yoga with Crysterra Wellness – Variety of classes Tues-Thurs. Cost varies. For schedule & details: CrysterraWellness.com.

Stop Sabotaging Your Self-Care – Christy DeBurton will guide you on a journey of self-discovery to examine the obstacles that stand in the way of you taking better care of yourself. 4-wk self-paced online course. \$79 (regular \$149). Yoga Room, 889 Honey Creek Dr, Ann Arbor. Info@ChristyDebBurton.com. YogaRoomAnnArbor.com/online-courses-self-care.

SUNDAYS

Bach Flower Remedies Level 1 Live Web – 3rd Sun. Learn how to use the 38 Bach flower remedies to help yourself and others conquer fear, worry, overwhelm, low self-esteem, lack of focus, poor concentration, trouble sleeping and more. With Nancy Buono, BFCP, Director of Bach Flower Education. BachFlowerSchool.com.

Hudson Valley Humane Society Rescue Reading – 10am-12pm. Includes humane education lessons, group read-aloud and dog meet-and-greet. Drop-off event. \$10; space limited. HSHV.org/RescueReading.

Clearing Meditation – 11am. 4th Sun. Each person gets one question answered for healing an issue. In person. Troy. RSVP required: 248-789-1980.

Online Meditation from Anywhere – 11am-12pm. Building an international sangha by connecting loving hearts. Donations welcome. To receive a link: CelesteZygmunt2@yahoo.com or Deep Spring.org.

Sunday Talk with Demo Rinpoche – 11am-12pm. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

Common Cycle Bike Repair Sessions – 11am-3pm. Learn about bike repair, share tools and build a sense of community. Volunteers ready to assist with maintenance issues or personal projects. 416 W Huron St, Ste 11, Ann Arbor. 734-619-0907. CommonCycle.org.

Inspiring Talk by Mata Yogananda – 7pm. Spiritual talk, pure meditation and silent prayer, with Winged Prayer for all in need at 9pm. Free. Self-Realization Meditation Healing Centre, 7187 Drumheller, Bath. 517-641-6201. SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

MONDAYS

Weekday Morning Online Meditation – Mon-Fri. 7:30-8am. Insight Meditation Ann Arbor offers a 30-min online group sitting via Zoom. Free; donations gratefully accepted. InsightMeditationAnnArbor.org.

Beginner Tai Chi – 10-11:15am. A series of postures linked together in a fluid manner. Focuses on relaxation in motion, balance and the mind/body connection. Can attend one or both sessions per week (Mon morning &/or Thurs evening). \$195. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Soul Power Mystic Arts – 5pm. 2nd Mon & Wed. Re-claim the real you, hear your evolutionary calling and cultivate the nature mystic within through 4 retreats, individual training, self-acceptance process, nature qigong, plant ally ceremonies and body-ecology psychology. Sliding scale. Mother Bear Sanctuary, 20470 Barton, Pinckney. 734-796-6690. MotherBearSanctuary.com.

Meaningful Mondays – 8pm. SevaLight Retreat Centre warmly welcomes everyone, of all faiths, meditation practices and traditions, to join us virtually. Will gather on video conference sharing in song/chants and inspiring readings from Mata Yogananda Mahasaya Dharmaji's writings, followed by Pure Meditation and silent prayer. Free. Email by 10am any Mon to receive the info about how to join by video: Info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

TUESDAYS

Senior Discount Tuesdays: Castle Remedies – Customers over the age of 65 can receive a 10% discount on their in-store purchases. In the Parkway Center, 2345 S Huron Pkwy, Ann Arbor. 734-973-8990. CastleRemedies.com.

Online Meditation from Anywhere – 9-9:30am. Building an international sangha by connecting loving hearts. Donations welcome. To receive a link: CelesteZygmunt2@yahoo.com or Deep Spring.org.

Hypnotherapy – 9:30am-7pm, by appt. Also Wed. Cheryl Beshada teaches and specializes in personal empowerment, releasing blocks and patterns of negative

behavior, higher self-communication. Free consultation. Warren. 586-899-9009.

WEDNESDAYS

Get the Most from Your DNA Test – 6-8pm. Learn what you can do with your results and what additional opportunities are available for discovering your genetic genealogy. Understand the science, how to find information and how to share that information. Course 39651. \$59. Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E Huron River Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-677-5060. wccnet.edu/noncredit.

THURSDAYS

Move With Us: Trager Mentastics – Jan 9-May 1. 10-10:45am. 1st Thurs. This is a gentle form of movement that is low key, focused on the nervous system releasing restrictive patterns. \$12 cash. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal and Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. Naturopathic SchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Class Observation – 11-11:30am. Also Fri. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal and Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. Naturopathic SchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Qigong: Basics – 11:15am-12:15pm. Class introduces participants to basic self-care stretches, breathing, meditations and self-acupressure for reducing muscle tension, increasing mindfulness, and revitalization. \$180. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Beginner Tai Chi – 6-7:15pm. A series of postures linked together in fluid manner. Focuses on relaxation in motion, balance and the mind/body connection. Can attend one or both sessions per week (Mon morning &/or Thurs evening). \$195. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Thursday Hills of Ann Arbor – 6:30pm. We ride some of the best hills A2 has to offer. A/B/C: 10-40 miles. Start at Wheels in Motion, 3402 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor. WheelsInMotion.us.

Thursday Evening Silent Meditation – 6:30-8:15pm. With Insight Meditation Ann Arbor. Free; donations gratefully accepted. Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W Liberty St, Ann Arbor. 734-994-4455. InsightMeditationAnnArbor.org.

Mindful Dexter – 7:30-8pm. 3rd Thurs. A short 30-min guided meditation that is a simple and practical mid-month mindfulness tune-up that you can access from wherever you are. Zoom. Tinyurl.com/indfuldexter.

FRIDAYS

Natural Turmeric Indian Wedding Facial for All – 9am-6pm. Design combines traditional ingredients like turmeric, used in Indian weddings for skin beautification, with modern machines that enhance the overall experience. Mahabir Wellness, 1640 Haslett Rd, Ste 100, Haslett. 517-325-9954. MahabirWellness.com.

Class Observation – 11-11:30am. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal and Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. Naturopathic SchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Online: Prayer Power Hour – 12-12:30pm. Prayer changes things. Our goal is simple: to love you, pray for you and introduce you to our loving Creator, the Great Healer. Free. Tinyurl.com/PrayerPowerHour.

SATURDAYS

Mindful Dexter – 9:30-10:30am. 2nd Sat. Includes a 25-30-min guided meditation, a few minutes of silent meditation, followed by time for comments/questions and a discussion on a mindfulness topic. Dexter Library, 3255 Alpine St, Dexter. 734-476-8474. Tinyurl.com/mindfuldexter.

Herbal & Natural Medicine – 10am-12pm. 3rd Sat. Come see for yourself and experience our ongoing Herbal Medicine Natural Medicine Training, which is a preview for the 2025 Natural Medicine/Herbal certificate training starting January. Free. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal & Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. Naturopathic SchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Pregnancy, Childbirth, Postpartum and Baby Classes – 6-7pm. Classes are held virtually online led by our top AID instructors utilizing state of the art visual aids and activities to keep it fun and engaging while presenting the latest evidenced based material on each topic. \$35/class. Childbirth-Classess.com.



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Miraculous Energies
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Malcolm Sickels earned his M.D. from the University of Michigan, where he taught fellow medical students about different approaches to health. Board certified in Family

Medicine and Holistic Medicine, he is in solo practice on the west side of Ann Arbor. Learn more at Dr.Sickels.com. See ads, pages 8 and 14.

Holistic Mental Wellness

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Karen Kerr, LMSW
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Karen8Kerr@gmail.com
KarenPKerr.com



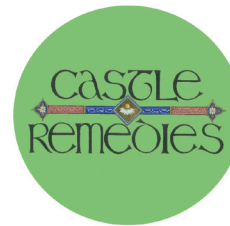
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Marsi@DarwinsEden.com
734-447-4303
DarwinsEden.com



This small no-kill farm near Chelsea was home of Guinness record World's Oldest Chicken Peanut. Her miraculous story is told, with pictures, in *My Girl Peanut & Me*, by Marsi Parker Darwin. See Community Spotlight page 11.

community Spotlight page 11.

Nature-Oriented Meeting Space

MICHIGAN FRIENDS CENTER AT FRIENDS LAKE COMMUNITY

7748 Clark Lake Road, Chelsea
734-475-1892
MFCenter.org/rent



We offer the holistic community a nature-oriented meeting space for workshops, meetings, counseling, yoga, youth groups and family gatherings. Main room accommodates 100, with two smaller classrooms and kitchen facilities. Hiking trails. Weekend rates range from \$200-\$400, additional for

extensive grounds use, camping. See ad page 14.

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NEW MOON NEURO

105 E. Middle Street, Chelsea
734-210-1922
NewMoonNeuro.com

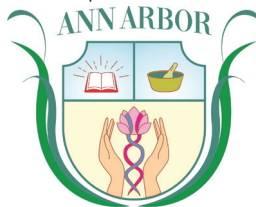


Located within AL-CHEMY Holistic Collective, New Moon Neuro is the area's only IASIS Micro Current Neurofeedback Provider. Find lasting support for anxiety, depression, ADHD, insomnia, OCD, addiction, TBI, migraines, pain issues and more - for the entire family. See ad page 9.

School/Education

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734-769-7794
NSHAAssociates@gmail.com
NaturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net



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ad page 9.

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734-741-0695
PeacefulDragonSchool.com



Tai chi promotes relaxation, is a meditation in motion and is known for increasing balance. Qigong means energy. This class includes Wild Goose Form, stretching, meditation and self-acupressure.

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ed. See ad page 9.

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- North New Jersey, NJ
- Northwest Florida, FL
- Palm Beach, FL
- Philadelphia, PA
- Phoenix, AZ
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Rhode Island, RI
- Richmond, VA
- Sarasota, FL
- South Central Pennsylvania, PA
- South Jersey, NJ
- Southeast North Carolina, NC
- Space & Treasure Coast, FL
- Tampa, FL
- Tucson, AZ
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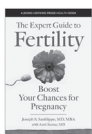
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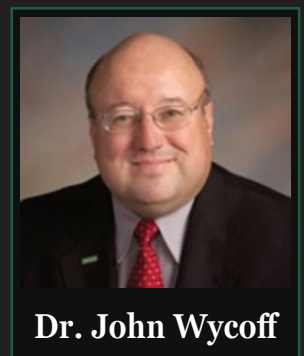


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